

To: Harrison, Melissa[Harrison.Melissa@epa.gov]; EOC Public Information[EOC_Public_Information@epa.gov]; Grantham, Nancy[Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov]
From: Gray, David
Sent: Fri 8/28/2015 6:25:27 PM
Subject: RE: Media inquiry, re Gold Mines in SC

Here is my response:

EPA has worked successfully to address environmental concerns at hundreds of abandoned mine sites across the West. EPA will thoroughly investigate this incident, and it is committed to applying all lessons learned to its work as it moves forward.

While EPA continues to investigate the root causes of the release of mining waste at the Gold King Mine, all EPA regional offices will immediately cease any field investigation work at mines, including tailings facilities.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released the findings of an internal review of the agency's response to the Gold King Mine incident. Led by five EPA personnel from multiple EPA regions and Headquarters, the reviewers were tasked with developing a detailed, chronological description of events as well as identifying potential factors contributing to the release.

The report provides observations, conclusions, and recommendations that regions may apply to ongoing and planned site assessments, investigations, and construction or removal projects at similar types of sites across the country. EPA will implement all the recommendations from the report and has shared its findings with external reviewers.

In addition to the internal review, the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) is leading an independent assessment of the factors that led to the Gold King Mine incident. The assessment began on Tuesday, August 18, and it is anticipated that DOI will provide the assessment report to EPA and the public within 60 days. The goal of DOI's independent review is to provide EPA with an analysis of the incident that took place at Gold King Mine, including the contributing causes. Details about the independent review will be made available by DOI when they become available. Both internal and external reviews will help inform EPA with ongoing and planned site assessments, investigations, and construction or removal projects.

Based on the outcome, EPA will determine what actions may be necessary to avoid similar incidents at other sites.

While EPA stops work on existing field investigations and assessments at these mining sites,

EPA also is instructing its regional offices to identify existing sites with similarities to the Gold King Mine site, to identify any potential immediate threats and to consider appropriate response actions.

From: Harrison, Melissa
Sent: Friday, August 28, 2015 1:16 PM
To: EOC Public Information; Grantham, Nancy; Gray, David
Subject: Fwd: Media inquiry, re Gold Mines in SC

FYI. Remember someone mentions his on our call this morning.

Melissa Harrison

Press Secretary

EPA

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Begin forwarded message:

From: "Fretwell, Sammy" <sfretwell@thestate.com>
Date: August 28, 2015 at 1:51:16 PM EDT
To: <press@epa.gov>
Cc: <harrison.melissa@epa.gov>
Subject: Media inquiry, re Gold Mines in SC

To media relations staff,

I am awaiting answers to a series of questions about gold mines in South Carolina and how the recent events in Colorado might affect Superfund cleanup operations at two of them.

Do you have any ETA on the time those answers may be available. I understand the EPA's Atlanta office forwarded this to Washington yesterday. I also was told that a response was forthcoming by this morning.

Please let me know the status.

Thanks,

Sammy Fretwell

Staff Writer

The State newspaper

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